

REMARKS

The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the Office action dated September 9, 2004. Claims 1-4 are pending in the application. Claims 1-4 are rejected. By way of the present amendment, claims 1-4 are cancelled without prejudice to further prosecution, and new claim 5 is added. In view of the amendments above, and the remarks below, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 and allowance of the pending claim.

Rejections under 35 USC § 102(b)

Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,194,096 to Ramsey. Without acknowledging the propriety of the rejection, applicant suggests that as claims 1-2 have been cancelled, the rejection of those claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) has been rendered moot.

Rejections under 35 USC § 103(a)

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,194,096 in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,546,950 to Cech. Without acknowledging the propriety of the rejection, applicant suggests that as claim 3 has been cancelled, the rejection of the claim under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) has been rendered moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 4 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, applicant has cancelled claim 4 and added new independent claim 5.

Claim 5 corresponds to the subject matter of claim 4, and incorporates the subject matter of cancelled claims 1-4. Applicant therefore suggests that claim 5 is in condition for allowance.

It is now believed that the subject patent application has been placed in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or concerns, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned agent of record.



CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, postage prepaid, to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on December 3, 2004.

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Respectfully submitted,

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